

Obituary of Robert A. Heinlein

Messages left on CompuServe's Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum
between May 9th and May 18th, 1988,
and responses by Virginia Heinlein.

Opening message from the Forum's System Operator.

#: 194779 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 08:08:08 Sb: #R.A.H. obit Fm: SysOp Wilma Meier To: ALL
Friends - Robert A. Heinlein has passed away. Word was passed through the network that he died on Sunday morning - the 8th of May.

Mr. Heinlein was one of the biggest names in the Science Fiction genre. Born in 1907, his writing career began when he was 32 (1939) with the publication of "Life-Line" in Astounding magazine. His first published book was *Rocket Ship Galileo*, a juvenile issued by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1947. Heinlein married Virginia ("Ginny") in 1948; they had no children.

He is the only man ever to win four Hugo Awards for best science fiction novel of the year (for *Double Star*, *Starship Troopers*, *Stranger In a Strange Land*, and *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*); he has also received the Nebula Award for over-all achievement as a science fiction writer.

In the mid/late 70's Mr. Heinlein had an operation called a "shunt" to relieve pressure building up against his brain. After surgery and recovery, he published his last works: *Friday*, *The Cat Who Walked Through Walls*, *Job: A Comedy of Justice* and *To Sail Beyond The Sunset*. *Cat and Sunset* appeared to be the beginnings of a series of which we will now never see the end.

His papers, correspondence, and memorabilia have been collected by the University of California, Santa Cruz.

We have lost a true Master, friends. My grief knows no bounds.

In sadness,
SysOp Wilma

Replies from the Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum's members.

#: 194791 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 08:52:41 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: SysOp Wilma Meier

I've spent my morning being numb. I am going to miss him so much, I can't tell you. Whatever I do in this field, I do because I was inspired by Heinlein to read, to write, to think. Books such as *Have Space Suit, Will Travel* and *Between Planets* and *Space Cadet* made my adolescence bearable; I still remember the day in 1971 that I came into about fifty extra bucks (I forget how) and blew almost all of it on completing my collection of Heinlein novels, and how delighted I was to find so many that I hadn't yet read.

We've read them all now; the master has laid down his pen. It's up to us now to carry on. Thank you, God, for Robert Heinlein.

#: 194805 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 09:08:33 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Raymond E. Feist To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Musing on RAH's passing, I find myself remembering a lot of different things. To say I was not a fan of his later work would be generous. And his earlier work was often, in a word, simplistic. But what I remember most was the "turn off my head, get away from it all" quality of *Tunnel in the Sky* and *Door into Summer*, when he made me forget I was reading and took me someplace new.

Love him or hate him, he was a giant in the field because of his impact. He made people take this literature of ideas seriously, as did Frank Herbert, and as does Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov. There are few names in this field to conjure with. We now have one less. He will be missed, both for his works and his presence. A Grand Master has moved on. Rest in Peace, Robert.

#: 194817 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 09:46:19 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Louis' Ghost To: SysOp Wilma Meier

What a loss...Simak just last week and now RAH...the hand of time is swallowing the demigods of our youth. It hurts!

#: 194828 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 10:34:46 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Michael Bastraw To: SysOp Wilma Meier

My first exposures to SF were comic books and juveniles at the public library. I had not read any "modern" SF until someone handed me a copy of STARMAN JONES. I read it in one night and then proceeded to read everything I could get my hands on by Mr. Heinlein. THIS, I thought, is SF with a capital "S". I might have a bit of trouble defending some of his later works (though I WILL certainly try at the drop of a hat) but even

mediocre Heinlein is better than most writers can turn out on a great day. I can only hope that he has found one of his alternate continuums and is having a grand old time with his many avatars and other creations. Mac'N Mike.

#: 194889 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 15:18:30 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Stark To: SysOp Wilma Meier
His books have always helped me through troubled times. Whether by allowing me to 'escape' into other realms or by showing me that one could go through adversity and grow from it. I feel numb.

Stark

#: 194890 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 15:20:24 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Mark R. Whittington To: SysOp Wilma Meier
Truly there are no words. We shall never see his like again.

#: 194894 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 15:40:21 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Seon the Vulcan To: SysOp Wilma Meier
All of the others have mentioned their sadness at seeing Bob Heinlein pass. I'm not exactly sad, as I believe we all come into this world with our exit reservation already validated, and Bob merely kept his to move elsewhere and elsewhere. Eighty-one years is a LONG life. He lived a good life, and we enjoyed his being here. However, I suspect that his books were mostly biographical, so I have the feeling that he has simply provided a cadaver, changed his name, and moved to another location. After all, Howards live for many more than 81 years. I wonder what he will accomplish with his next "life".
-----Cornelius-----

#: 194896 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 16:13:20 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Mark R. Whittington To: SysOp Wilma Meier
I've more to say about this. His works took me to worlds of imagination and adventure at times when reality seemed to be all darkness and despair. One would wish that there could really be an afterlife, a Valhalla for people like him, so that his indomitable spirit would live on in some sort in incarnation, in perhaps one of the many realities he wrote about. And, of course, his spirit does live, so long as people can dream of ships of space, of the cities of man on other worlds, of adventure, of honor and glory. Ad ra, Robert Heinlein.

#: 195072 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:55:15 Sb: #194896-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Mark R. Whittington
The solace in all this, and it is a good amount of solace, is that people will be reading Heinlein even as they travel to those places he wrote about and do the things he could only imagine doing.

#: 195137 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 04:04:27 Sb: #195072-R.A.H. obit Fm: Mark R. Whittington To: Brad Ferguson
Indeed. And one of those ships that will carry people to the stars will be the Robert Heinlein.

#: 194900 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 16:20:45 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Kathryn Beth Willig To: SysOp Wilma Meier
I just heard about it on the 6 PM news. I don't even have the words to express how I feel...numb, I guess, like you. It was nearly 11 years ago that I really fell in love with written sf...because I bought a copy of *Time Enough For Love* while on vacation. (I had read some Asimov and Clarke before then... but it didn't take.) After that, I read just about every book and story of his I could find. I think I read about 14 of his books in one summer. Unlike a lot of people, I enjoyed his post 1960 work a lot more than his earlier stuff, and I am very, very sad that we will never find out just where he was heading in his last few books. It seemed like he would never die, and though I know that because of his books, he will always exist, in the hearts of his fans, I am going to miss him very much.

#: 194905 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 16:41:20 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Phil Hershey To: SysOp Wilma Meier
Back in the 50's, in elementary school, I discovered RAH in the library and thus discovered the joys of reading for the fun of it.

In 1969, about 5 weeks into Basic Training, while standing in the chow line, a DI screamed at me to "Get that *&^%\$ grin" off my face. By God, I'd just gone over the 'hump' that he wrote of in *Starship Troopers*!

I may have drifted away towards Fantasy in the last few years, but I shall miss him dearly.

#: 194926 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 17:24:31 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Mike Resnick To: SysOp Wilma Meier
I spoke to my agent this morning -- she is also Heinlein's agent -- and she confirmed the news of his passing. She also mentioned that he had been working on a new novel for the

past year, albeit at a substantially reduced speed, but that she does not yet know how much of it he had completed or in what shape it's in. Will keep you informed as more is learned.

#: 194943 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 17:58:10 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Ray Pelzer (Yoda) To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Well, we can only hope that his "world as myth" concept is valid. That way, one day soon he'll be awakening from a Lethe field in an alternate timeline.....

adieu, Mr. H.

#: 195002 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 19:04:51 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: ECC To: SysOp Wilma Meier
Heinlein was one of the first authors I discovered, back at the public library, as so many others did. He is also one of the few I have read consistently since. The later material still made me wonder about it all, as *Green Hills Of Earth* did back in '62. We'll have to be satisfied with re-reading everything from now on.

Ed Colton

#: 195004 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 19:13:30 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: SysOp Jim Schneider To: SysOp Wilma Meier

I wanted to say something about Heinlein's death, but words come so hard. The earliest true SF that I read was a Heinlein, as is true for so many of us. The impact his stories had on my life would be hard to delineate. And to try to select my favorite story would be impossible, did *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* have a greater impact for me than, say, *Stranger in a Strange Land*. Or was it *Day After Tomorrow*. Or perhaps *Farnham's Freehold*. Or *Door Into Summer*.

Or maybe it was a short story, not a novel, that gave me the most enjoyment. Yes, I think it must have been "All You Zombies" that gets the nod. But if you asked me again in five minutes I'd probably say something else.

All I'm really sure of is that he, more than any other author, gave me more to think about in the stories I read. And even though I did not enjoy his more recent books as much as I did his earlier work, he will be sorely missed.

Jim

#: 195031 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:14:02 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: ENTERPRISE To: SysOp Wilma Meier

I can only say that his works have (to say the least) inspired me to do things I never thought possible. I'm not really known here, but I've read many of his works and can truly say that I'll miss his writings. But as they have said in many Sci-FI pieces.. "He is not

truly dead, so long as we remember him." And through his works, we will remember and thank the Lord for a person of his stature and understanding of human nature.

To those of you who grieve for his loss, (as I do), remember this...We are all strangers to one another until that fateful moment where we come together and share in the human experience. RAH allowed us all to share in that experience, and through him, we have gotten to know one another. Grieve not for the genius he was, rather read his works and rejoice for the genius he really is.

#: 195059 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:42:17 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: John Gersh To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Think of this, though. We're conversing and communing and grieving together on a network of personal computers. Our thoughts live on spinning disks in Ohio; we're looking at screens all over the country.

We've gone to the moon and landed a robot on Mars and lost valiant folk on the way to space. We'll do more.

How much of all that was reasonable to think about fifty years ago? How much of what we've done is due to kids thirty or forty years ago finding a book with that funny rocket-and-atom logo in the public library? They devoured *Starman Jones* and *Between Planets* and *Podkayne of Mars* and moved on to *Methuselah's Children* and *Starship Troopers* and all the rest. Then we went out and built the future, some of it, that he wrote of.

We'll build more, some of it. It will be the way it is, in part, because RAH wrote what he did, and because we read it, and read it, and read it...

#: 195105 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 22:50:48 Sb: #195059-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: John Gersh
It is that kind of world now, John. I remember that an Apollo team recited the last few lines of "Green Hills" upon its liftoff from the moon. On Monday, with absolutely no trouble, I got my colleagues at CBS Radio to crash Heinlein's death on the 11 a.m. news. I could not have done that for a science fiction writer even ten years ago.

I agree with you: Those books with the rocket-and-atom logos on their spines have influenced our culture. So has Heinlein, in particular. There will without question be a Luna City someday (because the people who will fund it and found it will have read their Heinlein, and they will be able to consider no other name for it), and if there is any justice there will be a Heinlein Square in Luna City, and it will be there that you'll find Heinlein's ashes.

#: 195169 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 09:10:38 Sb: #195059-R.A.H. obit Fm: Marshall L. Moseley To: John Gersh

When I was 11 years old my math teacher gave me a first edition copy of "Have Spacesuit, Will Travel." The things that book taught me effect me to this day. I learned what math was FOR, for one thing; I learned what engineering was, and how intricate and beautiful it is; I learned that the pursuit of knowledge is in and of itself a worthwhile act, and something to rejoice in; I got my first glimpse of adult ethics and most importantly, I learned a little bit about the human spirit--"Go ahead, take away our star if you can, and I guess you can. We'll MAKE a star."

He gave me so much over the years. So much entertainment, so much wonder. He made me believe that human beings--in all our savagery, nobility, and silliness--are for the most part a worthwhile species. He gave me hope.

Perhaps that is the greatest gift of all.

#: 195065 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:48:55 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Nate & Cindy To: SysOp Wilma Meier

I can almost see Pixel dragging him away for Ish to fix him. I hope it could be true. But as for the rest of us, let's hope he's honored by the same type of rendition as Twain finally received for his last novel. God knows, he deserved it, and we need it.

#: 195071 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:55:08 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Thanks to you, Wilma, and some further word from Alex Krislov in LitForum, I managed to put the sad news on the radio hours before the national wires had it. So, thanks.

Fred Pohl agreed to be interviewed by us and said some very good and generous things about Heinlein. The tape helped us make the story the big deal I wanted it to be. Thanks, Fred.

#: 195088 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 21:54:20 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: D. Halford To: SysOp Wilma Meier

May he find his way to a better universe. Ad astra per aspera.

For all the pleasure you gave me, Robert, Thank you.

Three of his novels were the first "grown-up" books I ever received. ROCKETSHIP GALILEO, ORPHANS OF THE SKY, and THE ROLLING STONES. I still have them and one day my children will own them.

My friends...we have lost a giant.

#: 195113 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 23:21:48 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Jim C. Lyon To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Robert A. Heinlein was a man of true genius. I grieve too, Wilma.

He will be sorely missed.

-- Jim Lyon

#: 195121 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 23:47:36 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Rick Sternbach To: SysOp Wilma Meier

As one who had the opportunity to illustrate his writings, I too will miss Robert Heinlein. But I will remember him as a man who had a deep appreciation and a wonderful enthusiasm for all that happened in science, especially the space program. On two separate occasions I had a chance to sit down with him and talk about the future; once at breakfast as we ended a conference aboard the S.S. Statendam (he and G. Harry Stine and myself), and again briefly at JPL for one of the Voyager encounters. If after so many years of watching developments and still he was enthusiastic and amazed, there must have been something in that to emulate. There was, and is, and my kid is going to catch it, too. Thanks, Robert. --Rick Sternbach

#: 195123 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 23:53:50 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Harry Henderson To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Wherever people do a job that they can be proud of ... Wherever people are not afraid to love with strong love ... Wherever people fight for freedom against the parasites of this world ... there Robert will be remembered

#: 195125 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 00:33:45 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Chris Winter To: SysOp Wilma Meier

So the man whom they used to call the dean of American science fiction writers is gone. I can't say I am surprised; I heard from friends that he was in poor health, and I suspected it was the final illness. Hearing of his death saddens me. But it also takes me back to a junior high school library in York, Pa, where I was "blown away" by the ending of "THE ROLLING STONES" and soon had read every Heinlein title they had. The quintessential Heinlein hero, who overcomes great difficulties through competence and pluck, impressed me deeply. Today I mourn the loss of a great writer. But the image of Heinlein that comes to mind is that depicted on the cover of the Midamericon program book: a man old but still vigorous, bound on some mission of importance. Fare well, Robert Heinlein, fare always well.

#: 195165 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 08:09:55 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: JERRY TURPIN To: SysOp
Wilma Meier

THE FIRST SCIENCE FICTION BOOK I READ WAS FARMER IN THE SKY IN THE 50'S. SINCE THEN I HAVE READ MOST IF NOT ALL OF HEINLEIN'S WORKS. IT IS A PERSONAL LOSS THAT I FEEL, I KNOW MANY OTHERS FEEL THE SAME.

#: 195211 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 11:47:30 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Binyomin G. Segal To: SysOp
Wilma Meier

There is not much one can add to your thoughts. We all have memories of the first "Heinlein Novel" that we read. His works were among the few that consistently challenged all I believed in. His books certainly added to my life. I am sorry to hear he is gone. I always looked forward to his NEXT book.

May he find happiness and peace, **Binyomin

#: 195073 (H) S1/General

09-May-88 20:55:33 Sb: It Needs to Be Said Fm: Brad Ferguson To: All
It is time, friends, to quote something appropriate:

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig my grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die
And I lay me down with a will!

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be,
Home is the sailor, home is the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

These lines now appear in three places.

#: 195126 S1/General

10-May-88 01:35:22 Sb: R.A.H. Obit - Gerrold Fm: David Gerrold To: SysOp
Wilma Meier

Wilma,

Since I was nine years old, one of the greatest joys in my life has been the finding a new Heinlein novel on the shelves of first, the library, and later the newsstands and finally, in the bookstores. I read them all. In the choice between bread and books, bread was always the loser -especially if the book was written by Heinlein.

And now there aren't going to be any more.
It's like being told that Christmas is over.

It's hard to know what to say.

My heart goes out to Ginny, of course. She has lost a husband, a partner, a lover, a companion. For her, the loss is intense and personal; and the rest of us can share only a very small piece of her sadness.

I leave it to others to talk about Heinlein's place in history, about the impact he has had on all of us, and all the other academic etceteras that will end up in the record books. To me, the true impact of Heinlein's work can only be measured by the difference he has made in all of our lives.

The difference Heinlein has made in my life is obvious. I would not be a writer today, were it not for Heinlein. I would not be writing the stories I am writing, were it not for Heinlein. But that's the smallest part of it. Heinlein's work was (was? -- damn that past tense anyway) always about honor and integrity and responsibility. And you can't read his work without coming away with a different attitude about yourself and your place in the universe. I think that's a great part of what he intended.

In 1976, Heinlein put a price on his autograph. One pint of blood. That's when I became a blood donor. It wasn't the autograph I wanted. I realized that what Heinlein had been writing about was not just noble sounding words -- if any of it really meant anything then I shared the responsibility to help repay the debt of the seven units of rare blood that had helped save his life. Until that time, I'd never given it any thought. After that, I donated blood regularly every two months. I paid the debt four times over and won two of those little gold gallon-pins. I used to take friends with me too. We always joked that were doing it for Heinlein; but we knew that we were really doing it to live up to the responsibility of being human. That was how Heinlein made better people out of all of us - he let it be fun.

I remember sending Robert a copy of the first book of my Chtorran series with great trepidation. It was very important to me that Heinlein *like* the book. Hell, I would have been flattered just by the fact that he took the time to read it. Two days after I put it into the mail, the phone rang and a deep, sonorous voice intoned, "David Gerrold, you are a very nasty man." I thanked the voice -- as you would for any compliment -- and asked, still puzzling, "Who is this?" "This is God!" And I knew who it was instantly. "Hi, Robert!"

He liked the book; he found it disturbing and terrifying and a great deal of fun.

And after that, not a lot else mattered -- because I knew that I had finally given him back a little bit of the excitement and wonder that his stories had always given me. Oh, hell -- the truth is, it's nice to be liked by God.

He liked the second book too, and he was always asking me when the third book was going to be published. He used to joke that I should finish the series before he died; I used to reply that it was going to take a stake through his heart just to slow him down. I was wrong.

I was just finishing the last two chapters on the third book; I was looking forward to sending him a printout of it, when I got the word that Heinlein had died.

Damn.

I wanted another phone call from God, telling me he had enjoyed my book and wanted me to hurry up and finish the next one.

#: 195230 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 12:29:13 Sb: #195137-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Mark R. Whittington

Actually, I think he'd prefer that it be the Rodger Young, but I know what you mean.

#: 195237 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 12:30:18 Sb: #195169-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Marshall L. Moseley

My copy of HAVE SPACE SUIT was due back at the library on September 21, 1964. I wonder how much the fine is by now?

That is my favorite Heinlein book, right there, and precisely for the reasons you state. In addition, it is beautifully written; it is a miracle of pace, building as it does from the mundane to the galactic; its characters, alien and human, are unforgettable. That line you quote is from what is, I think, the best scene in Heinlein and the best courtroom scene in sf .. and it speaks volumes about what the human spirit should be.

#: 195242 S8/R.A. Heinlein

10-May-88 13:04:20 Sb: R.A.H. Obit Fm: Morwood & Duane To: SysOp Wilma Meier

It's almost impossible to know what to say, faced with what seems like an impossibility. All my life there has never been a time when Robert Heinlein wasn't writing. And suddenly the world turns upside down in one rather important spot: and that spot aches....

He had my father's birthday. A line in STARSHIP TROOPERS caused my first real argument with my father, when I was ten...an argument that got my seat warmed, but ended as it began, with my father in the wrong and Heinlein in the right. In the literary sense, he **was** one of my fathers, or my grandfather, rather: the hardnosed but compassionate voice at the back of the SF genre, the **eminence grise**, insisting by example that things be done the right way, even if that was the hard way. Because of his influence, the way he impressed me before I ever knew him, I know which end to hold a slide rule by. Because of him I kept hitting math again and again until I finally started to understand it, however belatedly, at 33. Because of him and the way he wrote, I came to value pride and right action and courage and stubbornness in characters...and in character. People mattered more, because of the way Heinlein wrote.

And then I got to meet him, and found out where the pride, and the courage, and the right action, and the stubbornness came from. He was certainly human, and therefore certainly must have had faults: but oh, the virtues! -- his courtesy to the bewildered and starstruck, his humor and his fierce sharp wit, and always the interest, the interest in everything. He was daunting to be around, but the lively interest and the friendliness always kicked you up and over the edge of the nervousness about being around such a terrifyingly powerful person. Robert was a hoot.

Belief systems get in the way, perhaps, at a time like this. I find it difficult to believe that someone so totally **there** as Heinlein can be stopped from being at least somewhat

"there", even by death. But Robert would have valued the truth over mere belief any day, whatever the truth was: at least that's what I think. And dignity in grief, that's another thing I think he liked, to judge by his writing. So probably the best thing for me to do at this point is go off and reread "The Man Who Traveled In Elephants", and be profoundly grateful that he and we shared the planet together for so long.

Diane

#: 195249 S1/General

10-May-88 13:32:47 Sb: #194932-R.A.H. obit Fm: Kevin Ring To: SysOp Wilma Meier

It is extremely difficult to find words for the loss I feel. He will be sorely missed. Excuse me, I have tears to dry....

#: 195300 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 17:00:36 Sb: #195230-R.A.H. obit Fm: Don Sakers To: Brad Ferguson
And when we...or our children...ride those ships and visit those places -- let's take a moment to look at them one extra time, just for the sake of the man who will never see them, but would have given his life for the chance to do so.

#: 195254 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 14:01:10 Sb: #195237-R.A.H. obit Fm: Marshall L. Moseley To: Brad Ferguson

Agreed. My favorite Heinlein book is *The Moon is Harsh Mistress*, but *HSSWT* will always hold a special place in my heart.

#: 195289 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 16:26:51 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Phil Herscher To: SysOp Wilma Meier

My mother got her start in reading and loving science fiction with "The Puppet Masters". I started when she introduced me to his works with "Door Into Summer". If I ever have children you can be sure that they'll have the chance to read his books from my collection. Of course they'll be the umpteenth reprinting by then, because I keep wearing the books out by rereading them so often.

Thank you so much Mr. Heinlein, for all you've taught me.

Phil Herscher

#: 195307 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 17:23:34 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Don Sakers To: SysOp Wilma Meier

"Under the wide and starry sky / Dig the grave and let me lie / Glad did I live and gladly die / And I laid me down with a will! / This be the verse you grave for me: / 'Here he lies

where he longed to be, / Home is the sailor, home from the sea, / And the hunter home from the hill.”

--"Requiem"

Robert A. Heinlein

#: 195309 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 17:29:21 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Buddy Newkirk To: SysOp Wilma Meier

I still have that first paperback, *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* that enchanted, transfixed me. And I started reading it again, today, and thinking about how I wouldn't be who I am, where I am, without it. (DATA: I seem to be talking about myself...did I miss the point?) MIAHM has always been special, the sense of possibility, evolution, computers as *friends*. The way his books were friends, voices that guided me, you, us all. Things might be tough, but with brains and guts and time enough for love, great changes, new worlds, were possible. A flag with a brass cannon and the motto "TANSTAAFL" to remember the "Prof." by. We'll carry on, Robert. Follow the Clear Light.

#: 195311 S1/General

10-May-88 17:33:48 Sb: Heinlein Article Fm: Pat Frank(Pangloss) To: ALL

Well, the Atlanta Journal finally got around to mentioning Heinlein's death today, and the article they ran had some interesting quotes by Isaac Asimov, which I shall reprint for you here (though I suspect that they have already been seen here - I've been out of touch....)

---- "Robert Heinlein has been writing science fiction now for 48 years and from the very start he was recognized as a grand master," Asimov said Monday. "In 1975, the Science Fiction Writers of America set up just such an award, and he was the first to get it. There was no argument, much like George Washington becoming the first president."

Asimov said he and Heinlein had served together in Philadelphia during World War II, during Heinlein's second Navy hitch, and "formed a close friendship which never entirely broke up."

His favorite bit of Heinlein writing was the opening to "Door into Summer," in which "he described a cat better than anyone has ever described a cat. The work that impressed me the most was 'Solution Unsatisfactory,' written before the Manhattan Project, in which he accurately described the current nuclear stalemate."

-Pat

#: 195332 S8/R.A. Heinlein

10-May-88 18:49:48 Sb: RAH requiem in pacet Fm: Mike Crognale To: all
I cannot but believe that at the moment of transition, he found Jubal and Mike, Deety and John, Hilda, Maureen and Lazarus waiting for him. I have long believed that he spoke only truth. There is no death, merely a translation to another time-line. I am fortunate in that I own at least one copy of everything he ever published. I can only now sit and live in

his words and hope that I will meet him in the next time-line. "Mama Maureen comfort him" Ishtar and Galahaad heal him.

#: 195358 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 19:42:05 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Valerie DeBenedette To: SysOp Wilma Meier

My first response to the fact that Robert A. Heinlein is dead is, "No, he's not." He is right there on my bookshelf, just where he has always been. I've spent the last week cleaning up and setting my bookshelves to order after a move, and I know Heinlein is right where I can reach for him when I want to re-experience *Puppet Masters*, or *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, or *Farnholm's Freehold*, or a personal favorite, *The Glory Road*. His latest works may not have been as satisfying as his earlier ones, but that just means they had hard acts to follow.

Saying Heinlein is dead is like telling me Fred Astaire passed away. Astaire isn't gone as long as I can pop my copy of *Top Hat* into my VCR and Heinlein isn't gone as long as I have his books.

As soon as I get my stereo up and running, I will put on Judy Collins' *Judith* album, the one with "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" on it and raise a glass to Heinlein, the man who made me love science fiction, the man who took me through lunar rock tunnels with Manny and down a glory road with Oscar. I will be sad, not because he died--he had a long, active and successful life, which is the best anyone can hope for--but because there will not be a new Heinlein book to look forward to.

#: 195370 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 20:11:11 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Dr. Alan Dunn To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Goodbye to the Grand Master! The very first science fiction book I can remember reading was *Have Spacesuit - Will Travel*, borrowed from the Brooklyn Public Library. Not many years later did we watch a hazy black and white image of the first men on the Moon. But thanks to RAH, I had already been there and beyond. And when *Three Mile Island* stunned a nation, there were those of us who already knew that *Blowups Happen*. I always meant to write to RAH and tell him what he has meant to me. It somehow seems fitting that I can launch this message into the electronic universe. I know Bob will receive it. Thank you, Mr. Heinlein, for the grist you have given me for my dream machine. And good luck in your new location wherever/whenever that may be. Respectfully, your reader, Alan S. Dunn

#: 195393 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 20:53:38 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: HAL 9001 To: SysOp Wilma Meier

This announcement has been one I have been dreading to see ever since the word was posted last month that Heinlein was in the Hospital. I was only privileged to meet him once. That was at the KC Worldcon (1976) where he was the GOH. At that time the word

that was going around that if you ever wanted to meet him that THAT probably would be the last chance since he was not expected to live for much longer. As everyone knows, it was soon after this that he has the operation that was to save his life (as was mentioned in OBIT). This was my first Worldcon (and so he also introduced me to Worldcons in general) and I was able to meet him at one of the special Blood Donors get-togethers that he threw there.

As I look back at my interest in SF, his works are those that I remember as being the ones that introduced me to this field (via his juvenile books). Although his later books have been (at times) put down, I have always enjoyed them and (once I could afford them) I have always bought them in hard cover as soon as they got printed (only the older books are paperback versions in my collection).

As I re-read them I can see over and over how close they come to portraying events AS THEY ARE CURRENTLY happening. The latest flap on the news right now is the use of astrology to guide the President of the US in making decisions and schedule meetings. Heinlein predicted this in "Stranger in a Strange Land" over 20 years ago. As others have said here, I think of him now not so much dead as just changing identities (like his Howards) to live on under another name.

RIP RAH - You will be missed.

#: 195437 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 22:59:11 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Ira Stoller To: SysOp Wilma Meier
Wilma:

I couldn't have said it better. Heinlein WAS Science Fiction. I remember my sense of wonder when I discovered his "future history" series many years ago. From that time on, I grabbed anything with the Heinlein name on it, many times reading Heinlein, rather than school books. I thought that his last few works were well beneath the high standards he set earlier, but in no way does that diminish his overall status as a giant among his peers, and indeed, a giant among men.

The universe feels his loss, and all of us are diminished by his passing.

In sadness,
I R A

#: 195456 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 23:47:27 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Dan Corrigan To: SysOp Wilma Meier

You know, life's ironic. Yesterday, I was at my grandparent's house, just house sitting, when I got a funny feeling that someone close had passed away. The truly ironic thing was I was reading *Have Spacesuit Will Travel* when I paused to turn the six o'clock news on, and saw the announcement.

Bob Heinlein's work has had a profound impact on my life. The summer before I entered third grade was the first time in my life I read an entire book that didn't have pictures in it. I remember feeling disappointed that it didn't have them, and a little intimidated at seeing page after page of neat rows of unbroken text. But it captured and held my attention, and I also remember vast disappointment when I had turned the last page and the story had ended. That book was *Red Planet*.

When I was ten, I read *Stranger in a Strange Land*, and my eyes were opened in a way that has never since been rivaled. What I saw through Bob's eyes wasn't entirely pleasant to a ten year old, a great deal of it was confusing, but the ethics he presented for both good and bad conduct, shaped my own developing sense of ethics, and have largely stayed with me up to this, my thirtieth year.

Bob, I thank you. Wherever you are, I hope that you have found peace.

#: 195618 S1/General

11-May-88 18:24:57 Sb: #195506-R.A.H. obit Fm: Scott Hauger To: Raymond E. Feist

REF: I suspect the difference may be due to the juvenile novels. I can remember each and every one. We identified with the characters. Neither Robert Heinlein nor Andre Norton come close to being the best science fiction writers in terms of literary style or subject matter (although RAH outshines all but the Stars Are Ours and Time Traders series). Yet for me, the images they have imparted are the brightest. I think this must be because they were simple images that appealed to the naive or innocent imagination.

Interestingly, one of my favorites, no one else has mentioned -- Podkayne of Mars. I almost wanted to be a girl so I could be more like her. Another was Citizen of the Galaxy. The variety of ideas that RAH explored in his earlier works, from "Lifeline" to "The Roads Must Roll" to Double Star and Citizen of the Galaxy to The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress to Starship Troopers to Stranger - What a wonderful imagination and what a myriad of stages to project it upon. After Stranger, it seemed, he just played the same idea over and over again. That was fine and entertaining, but it was like the needle got stuck. Well, I wish I had one tenth the creative imagination and the ability to inspire the imagination of others. It was the interaction of that "naive" (in the best sense - fresh, uncorrupted) imagination on susceptible, idealistic teenagers that sets RAH apart.

Scott

#: 195441 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 23:30:08 Sb: #195300-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Don Sakers
He dedicated his life to making sure that the chance would exist; he spoke for it incessantly, and it has begun to happen. I wonder if Heinlein adopted that role by default, or if he really meant to do so, or if he were in fact an unknowing spokesman for whatever force might be guiding our progress? Those are not the kinds of thoughts he would have entertained, but I also suspect he wasn't in it just for the grocery money, as he so often claimed.

We will do what we do in part because Heinlein was here.

#: 195440 S1/General

10-May-88 23:22:40 Sb: #195254-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Marshall L. Moseley
THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS is a wonderful book. All I can do is tell you why I (slightly) prefer HAVE SPACE SUIT. First, all Heinlein's juveniles have a certain, basic charm that lift them about the genre; they are the TOM SAWYERs and the HUCKLEBERRY FINNs of sf. Second, I simply love the pacing in HAVE SPACE SUIT. You start with a high school kid with an eccentric (but likable) set of parents, and very gradually the story gets stranger and stranger, with the flying saucer and the Mother Thing, and then it gets even stranger, with the action moving to Vega. Then it gets REALLY strange.

And, boy, that trial scene. None better, anywhere. God, I miss him.

#: 195376 (H) S1/General

10-May-88 20:21:45 Sb: R.A.H. obit Fm: Bob Hovorka To: Wilma Meier
I've been at this keyboard on and off for the better part of a day, unable to write. Total blank. I'm staring up at a shelf full of Heinlein and slowly coming to the realization that it isn't going to get any fuller. There's space; I made sure of that when I set up the shelf. But...

Everyone has a First Heinlein story. Mine was "Starship Troopers" and I suddenly realized that a work of fiction is more than A Good Story. It can *say* things; it can *mean* things. After that came "Stranger in a Strange Land" and my view of the world was irrevocably changed. For the better.

And a writer was born. Whenever I'm asked what writer influenced me most, only one name comes up: Robert A. Heinlein. Everyone else is a runner-up. His style was so wonderfully transparent, *never* getting in the way. His view of the future was so perfect it was matter-of-fact in his writing. It showed. Heinlein was readable, without losing any of the wonder inherent in the genre. No one does it as well.

But, tanstaaf!. He has left a legacy with his writings for others to follow. I'm certain that somewhere, somewhen, he's already setup Heinlein's Freehold. I expect someday to be a customer, again. So...

Ta-Ta For Now, Robert A. Heinlein,

Robert L. Hovorka, Jr.

#: 195449 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

10-May-88 23:31:38 Sb: #195218-##194779-R.A.H.obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: SysOp Wilma Meier
I never met Heinlein and I wish I had.

I know what he did for me, though. I was six and at the library, and there on the shelf was CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY. I must have picked it up because of the red rocket-and-atom sticker on the spine of the book; I liked skiffyish things on television. I remember understanding hardly a thing in CITIZEN -- but I DID understand the evils of slavery, Thorby's bravery and his love for Pop, and the machinations of that slimeball (Weemsby, was it?). It was a great read; I wanted more, and found it ... but CITIZEN was the first real book I ever read. Soon after that came BETWEEN PLANETS; RED PLANET; HAVE SPACE SUIT, WILL TRAVEL; SPACE CADET -- in short, most of his juveniles.

Heinlein really mattered to me in high school. I still remember the day I found THE DOOR INTO SUMMER, a book which focused in me what has become a lifelong affection for cats (although I've never quite had the nerve to name one Petronius). THE DOOR INTO SUMMER taught me something about the unconquerable spirit of someone who is determined to right a wrong, who has had enough and won't take anymore, who will do what he must to achieve justice. I also found STRANGER and GLORY ROAD and DOUBLE STAR and WALDO then, too.

I remember when I was eighteen, wasting my time in an abortive attempt at college. I somehow scraped fifty bucks together when I found that Ace Books was reissuing most of Heinlein's novels, all with beautifully wrought Steele Savage covers. I found Heinlein books I'd never even heard of before then -- TIME FOR THE STARS and THE STAR BEAST were two of them. I remember that utter delight of discovery, and I remember going through that pile of books, reading, reading.

I remember being thirty and walking down Madison Avenue on my way to work when I suddenly saw FRIDAY on display in a bookstore window. The book was a complete surprise to me; I had not heard Heinlein had another book coming out, and the "sudden" appearance of FRIDAY again proved to me what a major event the arrival of a Heinlein book still was to me. I paid cash for the hardback, stripping my wallet bare, and found in FRIDAY all the elements that, to me, had made Heinlein's work great.

I haunted Fifth Avenue last year to find an early copy of TO SAIL BEYOND THE SUNSET. I did, too; I filehed a copy out of a box in the bookstore's delivery area. (Oh, I paid for it, all right. I just pretended it'd been on a shelf.)

Now I'm 35, and I wish I could tell you that being 35 means that you don't need the magic quite so much anymore. But I do, I do indeed; I need it just as much as I did when I was six, standing tip-toe on my schoolbag so that I could reach the library shelves with the H books on them. That curious kid is still reaching for those books; the adult who somehow came to succeed him is still in tears that the master is gone.

#: 195583 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

11-May-88 16:38:21 Sb: RAH Fm: George Smyly To: ALL

When they started a segment of All Things Considered with the first line of "Stranger in a Strange Land" I knew Heinlein must have died.

His past few novels were perhaps not his best but with works like "Stranger...", "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress", and "Time Enough..." on the shelf I don't think better science fiction could be found. What better way to introduce a young reader to fiction than through one of his 'juvenile' books?

I enjoyed Harlan Ellison's comparison of Heinlein to Fred Astaire. To paraphrase, he said that both men made it so easy, yet if you tried to duplicate what they did you would fall on your rear.

Like everyone else I'm saddened by his passing but the books and ideas will always remain as long as there are readers.

Ars longa,
Vita brevis R.A.H.

#: 195680 (H) S1/General

11-May-88 20:39:05 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Cheri To: SysOp Wilma Meier
To the man who provided me with the incentive to read for pleasure.

May you drink, forever, deep.

Cheri

#: 195773 S1/General

12-May-88 00:01:10 Sb: #195575-R.A.H. obit Fm: Don LeBow To: Marte Brengle
Losing Simak and RAH within a month made me think of the MAGIC of writing. As long as the books are there, the author lives. I know that sounds sappy (wait! It gets worse!) It's a very special gift to be able to leave something of yourself behind.

So ... step outside. Look at the Stars. Look at Yourself. And Ponder. Run the ponderings through the Heinlein and Simak and Sturgeon Filter (and all the other writers who've warped your brain cells.)

This is a Gift Beyond Price. I'll miss these guys. But Thank God for the legacy.

>>don

#: 195776 (H) S1/General

12-May-88 00:21:57 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: Lou Wiener To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Wilma, I read of Heinlein's death in the L.A. Times yesterday morning. I felt a great loss. I remember reading ROCKETSHIP GALIEO as a pre teen in the 40's. I still remember the movie Destination Moon. These two events have made me a life long science fiction reader.

I may not have completely agreed with his latest books, but I found them enjoyable. I teach third grade and found a copy of RG and have loaned it to some of my better readers. Most of them enjoyed it even though it is dated. Who knows, maybe R.A.H has started a new generation of readers.

I will miss not looking for a new book by him. -Lou Wiener-

#: 195832 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

12-May-88 11:07:42 Sb: #Farewell Fm: Joel Schwartz To: All

Farewell to a friend I never met. For me an era has ended. One of the first books I remember reading was The Red Planet. It started me on a life time of reading or waiting for books by Heinlein. As I grew, I moved away from sci-fi and RH to have the latter day pleasure of rediscovering his work once more and to read it all anew, and to share and appreciate his insights, his philosophy, his points of view. I look upon him as a spokesman and a champion, with admiration and respect. When I read his work I was totally enmeshed and enchanted.

Two nights ago I heard the news commentator briefly state that Robert Heinlein, science fiction author, died at age 80. He was, continued the reporter, the inventor of the water bed. End of story.

For me an era had ended, a pillar had fallen. Almost as saddening as his death was the fact that I had no one to share my grief with. My associates are not sci-fi folk, and no one who was not totally into his work can understand the depth of his loss. Nor did I have a forum to turn to, since I had drifted away from Analog since the death of Campbell.

This morning I thought of Compuserve and looked to see if there was a sci-fi sig and so I am here for the first time. I think RH would think it amusing that in an electronic age I must turn to a computer to share my human grief with others of like mind.

And so I turn to you, unseen friends, and tell you all how very sorry I am to have lost so dear a friend and share with you my tears for his passing. Peace be with you all, and to Robert. Joel Schwartz

#: 195842 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

12-May-88 11:59:02 Sb: #195832-Farewell Fm: Doug Pratt (ModelNet) To: Joel Schwartz

Joel, that was quite a message. But consider this: if RAH hadn't lived, you (and I!) would have missed so much of our lives. If he hadn't died, you would never have found this Forum. Stick around. This is a GOOD place to be.

Best, Doug

#: 195843 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

12-May-88 12:05:33 Sb: #195832-Farewell Fm: Raymond E. Feist To: Joel Schwartz

Sorry we had to "meet" this way, Joel, but many here share your sense of loss. If you wish to add your voice to those here who are asking NASA and Congress to name the first permanent orbiting space station after RAH, you would be certainly most welcome. And we hope we'll see your continued presence here. Best, REF

#: 195962 (H) S1/General

12-May-88 20:32:46 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: ANDREA To: SysOp Wilma Meier

It is with great sadness that I read the message on the death of Robert Heinlein when I signed on today. It is a message we all expected for some time, and I was frequently relieved when I didn't see it- but luck and time finally ran out. RAH had a profound influence on me from my earliest childhood, and from the time my father introduced his stories to me 30 years ago I was hooked on SF. My career decision to become an engineer (not exactly common 20 years ago!) can be traced here too - my only regret is that I never met him, except in spirit, and that lives on.

Andrea Mandel

#: 195972 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

12-May-88 21:21:10 Sb: #195832-Farewell Fm: Gary Hoff To: Joel Schwartz
Hi-Some message! I usually just drop in here from time to time, but I've been moved more by the death of RAH and the response here than I've been by anything else in a long, long while. Speaking as a lifelong fan and a struggling SF writer, it's amazing how much of his personality and life will survive his body--in all of our memories and in our own work and the work of those who follow us. Welcome to the forum. GLH

#: 196033 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

13-May-88 03:10:15 Sb: #195972-Farewell Fm: Joel Schwartz To: Gary Hoff
Gary-- Thanks for your reply and your greeting. I too was surprised at the response to Robert's death, both here on the forum and in myself. As I typed my message tears began and I was crying as I wrote. I was surprised at the depth of my feeling. My (unfortunately) one-way association with Robert seems life-long, though it has lasted only (!) 35 or 40 years. His body of work was a resource that was always there in the back of my mind to be

revisited and enjoyed again. Now I, as I am sure many others, will go back again and seek out his work (I gave most of my copies of his work to others over the years) and read it again. Do you know if there is a bibliography of his work available? My favorite book was "The Moon is A Harsh Mistress," and I was also found of his youngsters in space stuff. Again, thanks for your reply. --Joel

#: 196090 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

13-May-88 11:10:12 Sb: #195832-Farewell Fm: Jeff Shelton To: Joel Schwartz
Joel,

I know I'll be one of many replying to tell you that your feeling of loss is shared and understood. Robert Heinlein is one of a very few writers who really could make the world a better place for his readers....

I was raised in one of the narrowest, most bigoted, "fundamentalist" churches around. Then, at age 15, I found and read "If This Goes On..." It's hard to describe what it meant, to "watch" John Lyle struggle with the same questions that haunted me. I know that my life would have been totally different, and far less happy, if I had not read that story.

Like you, I've only discovered this forum in the wake of Mr. Heinlein's death. In fact, I'd never really seen what electronic forums were good for. Now I know.--Jeff Shelton

#: 196097 S8/R.A. Heinlein

13-May-88 13:13:03 Sb: #196051-Heinlein Station Fm: Randy Lee To: SysOp Wilma Meier
Wilma,

I have been thinking about what folks have been saying about their first encounter with the canon of RAH. I think that the first one that I read was "Double Star" in about the same year (1954) I would not say that it is my favorite (I don't think I could narrow it down that much) but as the first that I read it does have a special place.

Strange; I do not think I have ever been so grieved at the death of a non relative (and some who were related) as I am by RAH's passing. Yet he was of a full age and had a full life and gave countless hours of pleasure to uncounted readers in the whole literate world. Perhaps it is the knowledge that there will be no new Heinlein book to look forward to.

"Dum vivimus, vivamus!"

~Randy

#: 196313 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 09:34:51 Sb: #194779-R.A.H. obit Fm: ROY C. PETTIS, JR. To: SysOp Wilma Meier
More important than the specifics of the books was the unrelenting message to THINK:

"Make up your own mind always;
Think it through before you do;
Get the facts before thinking."

His books helped me get beyond the stage when I thought I ought to know everything.

#: 196282 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 07:04:00 Sb: #195441-R.A.H. obit Fm: Gary McGath To: Brad Ferguson

"Requiem" (his finest story, I think) serves well as his own requiem: the story of a man who lived to see the things happen which he had dreamed of, and which he helped to make happen -- even if Heinlein, unlike D.D. Harriman, never actually made it to the moon.
-- Gary

#: 196334 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 10:54:04 Sb: #195437-R.A.H. obit Fm: Roy S. Laufer To: Ira Stoller Ira,

I don't think that it serves RAH's memory to be only sad at this time. Reflect that even though he is gone, he has left us all and our posterity a priceless gift of his bottomless imagination! I too remember first finding RAH's children's S.F. books in elementary school and growing up with his adult books. His sense of wonder and imagination had its effect on me, and for this I will always be grateful. Through his works, I found the rest of the world of S.F. Not only have we benefited from his creativity, but all of his works still exist to enchant and effect generations to follow.

I do not know anything about RAH's private life. He lived 81 years, pretty long for Homo Sapiens (if not for Lazarus Long). I hope that they were happy years.

We have indeed lost a Grand Master of the genre. RAH and science fiction are almost interchangeable. We may have lost his body, but we still have his visions, and always will...

-RSL-

#: 196349 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 12:19:42 Sb: #195059-R.A.H. obit Fm: Lawrence M. Brown To: John Gersh

I had been out of the country for the last two weeks and didn't hear the news until the 13th. I called up this message thread because I knew I could get more and better information here than in the news. Your response just drew me up short--I was out of touch because I was part of a team installing a worldwide network for a bank which is considered one of the largest in the world. Your response made me think: "How many of us are doing what we do because we wanted in some small way to build a portion of that world RAH made us see in our minds?" Thank you for the insight into the grief we all feel.

#: 196438 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 18:23:43 Sb: #196313-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: ROY C. PETTIS, JR.

You're absolutely right. The basic thrust of Heinlein's advice was utterly sound. I don't care for some nigglin' specifics -- I think pets should be spayed and neutered, and he was dead wrong about nuclear testing -- but Heinlein remains my inspiration and, to my mind, a great teacher.

#: 196439 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 18:23:53 Sb: #196349-R.A.H. obit Fm: Brad Ferguson To: Lawrence M. Brown

You said "I called up this message thread because I knew I could get more and better information here than in the news." That struck me funny, because I agree: I work for CBS Radio News, saw the word of Heinlein's passing posted here, and immediately called the network to see if it had hit the wires. It hadn't (and it wouldn't for more than another three hours), so I dictated the story off the top of my head, and we got it on the air while I was still on the phone.

That's how good the information here is.

#: 196443 S8/R.A. Heinlein

14-May-88 18:25:54 Sb: Heinlein obit Fm: Knight of Ni To: anyone
I grieve with all of you. Altho' I did not see any news stories on Robert Heinlein's tragic death, a friend of mine working at a newspaper called when he happened to see a notice on the UPI bulletin. Shock, indeed. And sorrow. He was a master...

#: 196461 (H) S1/General

14-May-88 19:07:26 Sb: #196334-R.A.H. obit Fm: Ira Stoller To: Roy S. Laufer
No, no, you misinterpret my sadness. I am sad that the flow from his pen is now forever stopped. I am delighted that he did indeed take up that pen in the first place. Had I been around during Shakespeare's time, I'm certain I'd have been equally sad at his passing. Am I calling Heinlein the Shakespeare of science fiction? Perhaps.

I R A

#: 196573 (H) S1/General

15-May-88 08:50:41 Sb: #196461-R.A.H. obit Fm: Roy S. Laufer To: Ira Stoller
I understand, Ira. It's fantastic, the communal grief that has poured out through my terminal through the past week. I wish that the next time someone writes some tedious article of the 'impersonal' nature of telecommunication, that they are forced to read some of the recent threads on this forum and others that mourn the passing of a great writer...

-RSL-

#: 196516 S1/General

14-May-88 22:52:17 Sb: #196251-R.A.H. obit Fm: HAL 9001 To: Dan Corrigan
I have been re-reading all my old Heinlein's this week as a memorial to him. The more I read, the more he has come UN-COMFORTABLY close to the mark on ALOT of events (or trends) that have occurred. Go back and read the headlines of the CRAZY YEARS in Methuselah's Children. There are some that are NOT that off the wall anymore.

I also reread the "Take Away our Sun and We will build another - Then come after you [for judging us]" Defense from "Have Spacesuit - Will Travel". This (early on [1958]) summed up his concept of the Human Race (earlier in the Trial he stated that the Human Race HAS no limits) and later had Lazarus note the same thing in one his NOTEBOOKS (and the talk at the reception for Justin Foote 45 at Boondoggle). To Paraphrase the 23 Psalm:

Yea though I walk through the Valley of Death
I will fear no Evil
Cause I am the Meanest SOB AROUND!!!

#: 196575 S8/R.A. Heinlein

15-May-88 09:12:09 Sb: #196097-Heinlein Station Fm: Richard Gunter To: Randy Lee
"Dum vivimus, vivamus!" Indeed!

Perhaps he wrote his own best epitaph, as he wrote the best of so many other ideas.

Farewell, Robert. God, we'll miss you!

#: 196681 S8/R.A. Heinlein

15-May-88 15:50:36 Sb: DON'T FORGET ME Fm: Bill Salina To: SysOp Wilma Meier

Mr. Heinlein has been an inspiration to me over the last 10 years. I've owned and read everything he's written (under his own name or others). Without a doubt, he's been one of those people who have had the most influence on the way I think and act. I will miss him alot.

#: 196826 (H) S1/General

15-May-88 22:46:14 Sb: #195962-R.A.H. obit Fm: JD Bell To: ANDREA
I cant quite see the keyboard or the screen through the tears so this is quite rough. I learned of his death when my wife woke me up on Monday morning and told me she heard it on the tube I felt a shock run through me, as if the earth had fallen away beneath the bed. He was as a father to me in many ways, he opened my eyes to SF, encouraged me with his offhand remarks about writing SF and inspired me to try some of the alternative lifestyles of his societies. Didn't work so well, but I learned about life from that...well Brad was wrong about one thing RAH had a lot of children-all of us and everyone who ever read and resonated to his books we are his children and his heirs. Good by Bob. JDB

#: 196834 S1/General

15-May-88 23:15:17 Sb: Heinlein Station Fm: Cherns Major To: SysOp Wilma Meier

He was such a huge influence on and inspiration for so many of us. Some friends of mine were involved in organizing Westercon XXX (in Vancouver, about '77, I think), and RAH had said that, if enough blood donors wrote and asked him to attend, he might consider it. I wrote, enclosing copies of about fifteen years of blood donation, and received a short but nice postcard back. Well, I had been saying some pretty nasty things about him since *Stranger* (and these things certainly got nastier with each book thereafter, with the obvious exception of *Moon*), but I found myself running out in the hall and buttonholing friends, colleagues, and teachers, pushing the postcard in their faces, and yelling: "Look! *Robert Heinlein* wrote to *me*!"

I see that someone in one of these threads mentioned "The Man Who Traveled in Elephants," an exceptionally sweet story, one that points out how wide his range is. I guess it also demonstrates that he will always be with us in many important ways.

In sorrow, --Cherns

#: 197030 S8/R.A. Heinlein

16-May-88 15:05:59 Sb: #Tragic loss Fm: Dan Henderson To: SysOp Wilma Meier
I'm still in shock. No other human being besides my parents (I'm even counting my brother here) has had such a pervasive effect on the person I have become. And now he's gone. For the last six months I had been intending to write to the Heinleins again; twice before I had written and once got back a very nice, warm note from Ginny. But I was reluctant to invade their privacy, especially since I was planning to ask for the favor of more of his signatures to place in my growing collection of his hardbacks. For all I know, they both really enjoyed fan mail, but still I remained reticent.

For me it started at age eight, in 1957, when my third grade library teacher handed me a copy of "Have Space Suit, Will Travel." From the moment I read the sentence about milk and soggy cereal soaking Clifford's lap, I was hooked. Ever since that day, I have bought every book of his I could get my hands on, in hardback if possible, bought multiple copies of the paperbacks I wore out, and looked in vain for his earliest detective novels (my local used bookstore has standing orders). I've combed libraries for his periodical publications, and been only partly successful in finding all of those, but by the time "Expanded Universe" was published, I had already read everything in it (except, of course, his wonderful comments). Heinlein is the only author I never tire of rereading.

My favorite of his works remains "Time Enough For Love," since it stitches together so well many of the characters that had meant so much to me in my childhood. Somehow "Number of the Beast" never had quite the same impact, perhaps because of what Bob was going through medically while he was writing it. I sure would like to get my hands on the original manuscript; I was told that it was about the length of the Bible!

As a direct result of the effect this man has had on my life, I studied Space Science in college, and applied in the late '70's for a Mission Specialist slot on the Shuttle (turned down, of course). My fondest dream remains to go into space, and I'm working now on a

Ph.D., in no small part to make myself more eligible for future astronaut hiring opportunities.

I would have contributed a substantial fraction of my investments if there had been a way to buy Bob a ticket to the moon before he died; I think I know how much it would have meant to him.

I was enthusiastic about joining Cub Scouts and followed through to the rank of Eagle with the encouragement of his juveniles (and now feel especially privileged to have been one of the relative few to read "Tenderfoot In Space" in "Boys' Life" in the '50's). Because of "Glory Road" I took up fencing in college, and even as we speak there's a Ruddy Abyssinian named Pixel wandering around the house, perhaps through walls (though he hasn't yet decided to let me catch him in the act). Unlike one of the other contributors to our electronic memorial service here, I *did* once name a cat Petronius Arbiter. "Job: A Comedy of Justice" was especially delightful for me, since I live in Texas, share Bob and Ginny's love of travel, and had recently visited Tahiti & Bora Bora and Denmark shortly before "Job" was published.

I'm hoping against hope that there was one more book close enough to publication for someone to follow through. And I feel a bit morbid about this, but maybe now "Destination Moon" will be released on video and I'll finally get to see it.

Repeated requests in the Suggestion box of my local repertory cinema have failed to bring the film version to town. If someone would take on the project of putting more of his work on film, I'd be ecstatic. But not before I get through the grief, and that will take a long time.

I have lost someone who means more to me than either of my grandfathers did, more than any uncle or cousin, and this without ever even speaking personally with him, let alone meeting face-to-face. However, he has left me the priceless gift of a verbatim record of everything he ever said to me, in his books, and that I cherish dearly. I once mustered the courage to call Neil Armstrong on the phone, and although those five minutes of conversation are etched deeply in my brain (I was all but incoherent, and I'm sure Dr. Armstrong must have thought me quite strange), I would trade them gladly for the chance just to silently shake the GrandMaster's hand. That possibility is gone forever. We are all in mourning; the world can never be quite the same.

As is true of several others here, I have found this Forum for the first time in the wake of our tragic loss. Thank you all for being here. And please, Wilma, add my name to the next Fax to go out (if there is one) requesting the naming of the space station for the source of so much of our mutual inspiration. Thank you in advance.

Warmest personal regards,

Dan J. Henderson Houston, TX

#: ?? (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

16-May-88 00:00:05 Sb: #196090-Farewell From: Saakir of Vulcan

With Heinlein's death comes a sadness in my heart. Although his going means an end to his ever expanding universe, we should not forget the wondrous works he has blessed us with. Even though he did not last as long as Lazarus Long, his works shall continue to grow and his work become immortal with every reading by new and devoted fans. May he now truly be able to join with all his characters as an immortal figure upon history. . .

#: 197412 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

17-May-88 10:17:26 Sb: #196090-Farewell Fm: Joel Schwartz To: Jeff Shelton
Jeff- I am glad that Robert's work had the same liberating effect for you it did for me. His work, together with the collected editorials of the late John Campbell of Analog magazine, form a rational nucleus on which to build a philosophy of life. Robert also seemed to share some of the peeves I have. I remember (approximately) one of his choice passages from "The Moon is A Harsh Mistress:" "Sorry I'm late dear. There was a line jumper at the air lock and we had to try him and hang him."

I have used electronic forums before, and have known them as support groups, but never as support groups in this real and vital sense. This one served as a real catharsis for me and was really helpful to me.

I wish you (all) well and sympathy in our joint loss.

-Joel

#: 197925 (H) S8/R.A. Heinlein

18-May-88 22:09:32 Sb: #195450-#194779-R.A.H.obit Fm: Tim Cadell To: Brad Ferguson

The first book I read by RAH was The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag. It's still my favorite of shorts, but my most read is Orphans of the Sky. That one really hit me. Thanks for saying all the stuff I couldn't, people. Tim

Letter received on 25 May 1988.

Mrs. Robert A. Heinlein
23 May 1988

Dear Wilma,

Thank you for passing along the CompuServe messages through David Gerrold. I've had a good cry over some of them.

To tell the truth I had forgotten meeting you at that Phoenix World Science Fiction Convention. Robert had sent me off to that to do autographing for him, because his doctor had told him to keep off airplanes after that carotid artery by-pass operation--he was grounded for a year, and not up to a long drive down there and back. So I went down there, armed with that stamp with his power of attorney, to sign books for him at the blood drive.

This house, to which we moved last year, is so quiet that even Pixel's faintest meow can be heard. It sounds loud.

Here is a copy of the letter I'm sending out to all except our closest friends:

"I am overwhelmed with cards and letters, but I appreciate each one, and hope to answer every single one of them.

"I appreciate your thoughts and prayers. It was a surprise to me to learn how greatly Robert was known and loved, but I suppose I ought to have guessed from the mail which came in.

"It's hard to tell you how much I have been overwhelmed by affection, cards, letters, flowers, fruit and loving thoughts. It means so much to me.

"Robert's sister and her husband have been seeing me almost daily, and that has helped over the bumps. I know that any of you would have done the same, but you're all too far away.

"Also, I know better than to send a typed message to all of you, but if you could see the amounts of mail to be answered, you'd understand better.

"Robert's death came suddenly. That Sunday morning, we gave him his breakfast and he asked to rest for a while before his bath. When we returned about half to three quarters of an hour later, he'd gone to sleep forever.

"The arrangements were as he requested: Cremation, ashes to be scattered at sea with military honors. And that was all--no memorial services, no flowers, no requests for anything for favorite charities. I've cleared out all the sickroom gear and the oxygen tanks etc. He lives there once again. I'm sure. But free of impediments and pain.

"The obits and stories I've seen have been kind to him, and it appears that he was even more widely known and loved than even we realized.

"I am getting along well enough, except that there's a tendency to break into tears at the slightest sympathy. But I feel that Robert's love still protects me from harm and I feel his presence around me all the time.

"My thanks to you.

"Sincerely,

(signed) Virginia Heinlein"

And now, if I may, I will answer some of the comments with some reminiscences and comments of my own. You may publish what you see fit--all of this if you wish, but I ought to warn you that it will be lengthy, in all probability.

#: 194791 Brad Ferguson msg. I, too, was numb when it happened. We had so hoped that we could pull him through again. I've heard from so many people with the same ideas--that Robert inspired people to *be* something. That was his mission in life, after his beloved Navy. He always thought of himself as a Navy man, and he was, in the truest sense of the word.

Once, we were taken (unexpectedly to us) to a wedding reception in Japan, and a man in his forties or fifties came up to us and told Robert: "You are my spiritual father." I have never heard this sentiment better expressed, although many have said similar things. It turned out that that man was the best-known comic artist of Japan--Osamu Tezuka. We've been in touch with him ever since.

#: 194805 Raymond E. Feist msg. Robert was always studying and learning, and he taught himself to write. If his earlier work appears simplistic, remember that he had space limitations on his stories--and editors often did dreadful things to them. Later on, he learned to edit himself, and I helped him with that task.

The Door Into Summer was written in 13 days, and published almost exactly as first written.

#: 194828 Michael Bastraw msg. It's funny about those juveniles. His editor hated them and probably hated Robert, because those juveniles supported the "Books for Younger Reader" at Scribners for years. With each contract there was an option, and that's why the series continued to be presented to her annually as they were written. Until *Starship Troopers*. Miss D. (and I won't give her any more name than that) told Robert to put it on the shelf for a year and then rewrite it. Instead, the agency took it over to Putnam. Walter Minton later told us (Mrs. H. inserts here by hand "that he told his editor"), "If it's a Heinlein, grab it."

Robert never liked doing those juveniles. But their library sales were very good and that was our bread and butter in those days. Robert felt very strongly that each story should be different from any he'd ever written before, and he strove to do that. In this he had Tiffany Thayer as his mentor. But I haven't seen any of *his* books around for ages, except in our private library.

He dwelt in the realm of ideas, and those were his daily fare.

I did my very best to free his time for his studying and writing. If he didn't appear at many conventions it was because he was busy studying something new. He took off two years from his writing of fiction in order to study some innovations in basic sciences, producing only two articles for the Compton's Yearbook, "Dirac, Antimatter and You" and "Are You a Rare Blood?" which stimulated his interest in blood, although he had five units of his own rare type back in 1970. That caused the start of the blood drives, in 1976.

#: 194889 Stark msg. I still feel numb, too.

#: 194894 Seon the Vulcan msg. No, Robert's stories and books were NOT biographical (by which term I suspect that you mean autobiographical.) Or only rarely so--the incident about the cat at the start of *The Door Into Summer* actually happened.

#: 194896 Mark R. Whittington msg. Robert *does* live on in his books--he and *they* will never die because of this. It's his monument, and it's a better one than a stone one.

#: 195072 Brad Ferguson msg. As a matter of fact, you're quite right. Several years ago, in Antarctica, we were in Shackleton's hut, and there, on the counter, I found a magazine, crumbling with age, open to an adventure story--one of them was reading that, even as he was on one of the greatest adventures of his time!

#: 195137 Mark R. Whittington msg. I hope you're right!

#: 194900 Kathryn Beth Willig msg. In 1960, we went to the Soviet Union, spending a bit over a month there altogether, and we saw all the things I had been reading about for years. As Robert always remarked about the USSR, "Once is educational, twice is masochism."

Robert had a talent for bringing his characters to life; I believe that is the reason why so many people have been affected by his stories. Of all the characters and stories he wrote, perhaps the Dora story ("The Tale of the Adopted Daughter") in *Time Enough For Love* affected me most, although I found "The Long Watch" almost equally affecting. I cry every time I read those.

#: 194905 Phil Hershey msg. You'd be surprised at the number of people who have commented about *Starship Troopers*, saying that it had carried them through the Vietnam war. To some soldiers, it's still a Bible. And just this past week, a letter came in from a man who reads it when he travels by airplane--he's afraid of aircraft travel, but he reads that book as a sort of talisman.

#: 194926 Mike Resnick msg. No, there was no new novel in the disks alongside his new computer. I looked to see. But he did plan to go on writing, and had hoped to die with one in the pipeline--he didn't make that goal. There were files of notes on other stories, and two boxes of 3x5 file cards with notes on them, but nothing started or finished. *To Sail Beyond The Sunset* was his final work.

#: 195004 Jim Schneider msg. It is my own belief that *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress* comes closer to reflecting Mr. Heinlein's true beliefs than any of his other stories. But he never said that.

Robert always gave his utmost in his writing. He worked as hard over a short story as he did over a novel. We discussed that during his later career, and decided that the novel was more his me'tier than the short story. A good short science fiction story is harder to write than a novel, where there's more elbow room.

#: 195031 ENTERPRISE msg. You're right on the mark.

#: 195059 John Gersh. I hope so!

#: 195105 Brad Ferguson msg. Right. Apollo 14. The voice was that of Mission Control, though.

#: 195169 Marshall L. Moseley msg. Amen.

#: 195065. Nate and Cindy msg. Thank you. I hope so.

#: 195125. Chris Winter msg. Robert was never a man in robust good health--and he drove himself hard. The doctors sent him home to die in 1970 from Stanford Hospital. But I sat alongside him day after day, feeding him a bit at a time, and dragged him through. That first week, he regained one-half of a pound (up from 132 pounds) and we rejoiced. Thereafter it went better. Later that year he had herpes zoster (shingles) which infected and became a systemic infection. I took him back to Stanford (they didn't thank me for that!) and they cured up the infection. But he hurt like hell for the rest of the year. So we played games and other games, and more games, so he wouldn't just lie in bed and die. Then I spent the evenings running the business for him.

When that illness was over, he started work on *Time Enough For Love*. That was his longest book--I won't call it a novel-- and it took five months to complete. The aphorisms which set off the Dora story took the longest time to complete.

#: 195073 Brad Ferguson msg. Stevenson's words are fitting--both were men of fragile health, but Stevenson lived only 44 years. Robert lived past his 80th birthday.

#: 195126 David Gerrold msg. It's odd that most of the obits missed Robert's blood drives, and several of his other activities. Last October he was very busy trying to convince Jeane Kirkpatrick that she should throw her hat into the Presidential ring. She refused. I would have too. But is that the act of an anti-feminist?

That business of "This is God" must have startled a lot of people. Robert would pick up the phone when he felt like it and call a fan, and it must have made some of them feel faint. There was a card in the other day from a young lady who will be graduating from USNA soon, if she hasn't already, who was one of those Robert called and told exactly how to get into the Academy. She made [it], and she'll be an ensign any day now. I told her how proud Robert was of her when I wrote her.

I'm sorry Robert missed reading your new book, David.

#: 195237. Brad Ferguson msg. One day Robert came to me with a problem about the amount of air in a space suit. I took down my own reference books and calculated--there was no doubt that his answer was wrong. So we spent the afternoon checking, rechecking in every way we could do. And, finally, in trepidation, Robert changed a decimal point in *Mark's Engineering Handbook*. (The next edition we purchased had made the correction.) He signed the change in the margin.

All that for half of one line in the book. But we checked everything--copy editors being what they are. My math isn't and wasn't as good as Robert's but I did my best to check everything I could.

By the way, one of the letters which has come in since Robert's death has noticed the blank verse start of "The Tale of the Adopted Daughter..."

#: 195242 Morwood and Duane msg. Diane, why don't you get in touch with me? The last letter I send to your Philadelphia address was returned by the Postal Service, marked "Unknown at this address." You struck the right chord--"Elephants" was one of his favorite stories--I didn't think anyone else except Spider Robinson liked it.

#: 195300 Don Sakers msg. I have a picture taken by one of the Apollo astronauts, which was hanging on the dining room wall at our Bonny Doon house. It will be hung up here, too, when I get around to such things. It's an eclipse picture, but of an eclipse of the Sun by Earth, not the moon. It's striking, but I have to explain it, and very few understand the awe I feel.

#: 195289 Phil Herscher msg. A note about *The Puppet Masters*...

One scene was excised from this book--and some of the story was cut--I remember because I had to retype the entire book twice. The limitations of space were still there. And, as his editor warned, "You have to remember that your audience consists of quite young people." It wasn't strictly true.

But librarians were the dictators then, and they wouldn't have purchased and disseminated to children the sort of books they're allowed to read nowadays.

#: 195309 Buddy Newkirk msg. The editor decided on that title for *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress*. Robert had named the book *The Brass Cannon* - and we still have that brass cannon sitting in the living room to this day. I got it at an antique shop in New Orleans--Robert had expected that I would buy a small one, but this is a one-pounder, 25 inches

long, and weighs about 40 pounds. We used to use it on the 4th of July, and it makes a loud noise when loaded with black powder, let off a ring of smoke [Mrs. Heinlein adds in the margin - belches fire] and kicks backward like a steer. It was a saluting gun from a sailing ship.

#: 195311 Pat Frank (Pangloss) (From Voltaire?) "Solution Unsatisfactory" is widely ignored these days. Too bad.

#: 194779 Valerie DeBenedette msg. Robert and I never heard of that song, "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress" - how did we miss it?

#: 195370 Dr. Alan Dunn msg. I think that Robert will receive all of these electronic messages somehow. The flesh is gone, but the spirit continues in all of you--Heinlein's children.

I have already written too much. Farewell.

Sincerely,

(signed) Virginia Heinlein

(Then, added in Mrs. Heinlein's own hand--

P.S. On second thought--I'll continue with answers to the rest, where indicated, if it means anything to anyone. But later on--my desk is still loaded with condolence cards and letters which need to be answered. vh.

May 1988

Dear Wilma,

To continue with the reminiscences which those letters you sent call up:

#: 195393 HAL msg. There were going to be thousands at that WorldCon in 1976. We would have to give a reception of some sort, Robert decided. And he dreamed up the special Blood Donors reception. And that grew. And grew. And grew. It eventually turned into three of them, as I recall, and we had to get invitations printed, and check all the credentials which came in. I'd work from the time I got up until he joined me, and then we'd both work at it, and so on. (I'm an early riser.)

The dining table was turned into a desk, and we worked together there. We had to keep lists so someone could keep out the crashers. Robert made arrangements with the hotel over the telephone, and things worked out rather well. We ran out of those little red donor pins, I have one left, which was Robert's. He gave it to me because I sent mine off to someone who had lost theirs.

Being GOH at that convention wasn't the easiest thing in the world. We had to be escorted around to the various events we attended because it would have been impossible to get through the crowds otherwise. I think we saw more of the kitchens than we did anything else! And there was a service elevator which we used all the time. It wasn't very pretty, but it served the purpose.

Some kid wrote in some fanmag that he thought Robert could have given at least 20 minutes to each of his fans. I suppose he couldn't count. That 20 minutes would have added up to 72 fans seen in a 24 hour day, and that times three or four--well, you get the point.

And, by the way, HAL, Scribners is reprinting some of the juveniles slowly. *Citizen Of The Galaxy* came out last year, and we just got a copy of *Tunnel In The Sky*. They are saying that the books are dated, and they are, in some cases, but Scribner won't give back hard-back rights. I've tried for years to get a matched set of those printed in hardback because there have been so many queries about them.

#: 195437 Ira Stoller msg. Robert had moved on from hard core science fiction in his later books. *The Number Of The Beast* was intended as a spoof, although few recognized that. Somewhere around here there is a list of the anagrams he used in it--but I mislaid it when we moved. I'll come across it, one of these days. (There are still some reprints of "Are You a Rare Blood?" in the garage, and if people want to write, I will send them out as long as they last, but alas, there's no one here to autograph them.)

Anyway, you're right. Robert was a giant--almost single-handedly, he lifted science fiction out of the pulps, and made it a force to be reckoned with today, leading other writers to emulate his example.

#:195456 Dan Corrigan msg. Thank you. Robert's work seems to have had the same effect on a lot of people, I'm happy to say.

#:195618. Scott Hauger msg. That same editor at Scribner's tossed down the gauntlet to Robert, about writing stories for girls. He did several for a teen-age girls magazine, "Seventeen" I think it was. Then he did *Podkayne*. He borrowed from me some love letters he'd written before we were married, and took some of the ideas from those. (I got them back!)

It's too bad that you didn't like his later stories, but a lot of other people did.

#:195441. Brad Ferguson msg. You can be pretty sure that Robert did what he did because it was what he wanted and believed in. I can't recall any cases when he did things unknowingly, except when he was deep in a story, then I teased him saying that I'd found his slippers in the refrigerator.

That grocery money was partly true, particularly when Robert began writing...later on, he wrote what he wanted to write because he had his own reasons to do so.

#: 195376. Bob Hovorka msg. My own First Heinlein story was *Beyond This Horizon*. I suppose that it was at that point that I fell in love with him; he lent me the magazines, and I read them while I was in the Navy, working with him at Snafu Manor.

But, you know, Robert grew with the years and I loved him even more when he was an old man, and I had to do everything for him.

#:195449 Brad Ferguson msg. I wish everyone had met Robert. There were so many people who wanted to meet him, and so many who tried that we had to shut ourselves behind that fence and gate so that we could accomplish the things we wanted to do and needed to do. It was only after *Space Cadet* was written that I really understood that people *wanted* to read his messages, and I stopped trying to get him to do more sugar coating.

We never named a cat Petronius, either. That was a nom de plume for a cat called Pixie (Blassingame Pixilated Arroyo). I don't know how many copies of T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* I've owned. They always get away from me. (That's the book from which the musical "Cats" was taken.)

Over the years we've had a lot of cats, Pixie III, the one mentioned above, was the cat who taught us that cats are not colorblind. He didn't like my housekeeping and when he found a red thread on a green bedspread, he looked at me with a "Meow?" At the return to Earth of the Apollo 11, there was a Life photographer at the house. And one of our cats was having kittens. When those shots were developed, the technician must have been astounded to find pictures of kittens just born along with pictures of Robert--alternated sometimes.

#: 195776 Lou Wiener msg. Many, many letters have come in over the years saying that people are giving their old Heinlein juveniles to their kids and grandkids. So there will be more generations of Heinlein fans. It's one of the regular themes in the fan mail.

#: 195832 Joel Schwartz msg. If Robert's work hadn't affected so many people, why did the newspapers give his death so much space? That news has been in the papers as far away from here as Finland and Japan and China. "Science fiction writer" indeed. One of these days he will be recognized as a philosopher. That has already begun.

#: 195962 Andrea msg. In one of the juveniles, Robert had a red-headed chemist walk across the stage (that was all the sex allowed in juveniles in those by-gone days) and that was me. Robert put it into that story to make someone laugh. He was always proud of the fact that I had managed to major in chemistry and make a living at it before I went into the Navy. It was, to say the least, unusual in those days.

#: 196033. Joel Schwartz msg. If you will write via one of Robert's publishers, I can print out a list of everything Robert ever wrote. Please, don't all write at once! My desk is loaded at the moment. Hundreds of letters and cards have come in and are still coming in. And I'm hard put to it to answer them all, but I will do so.

#: 196097. Randy Lee msg. Someone had a plaque made of that motto, “Dum vivimus, vivamus” and Robert hung it with his Navy sword in his study. I didn’t think that anyone studied Latin anymore these days.

A thought just struck me--Robert always said we were lucky that Neil Armstrong’s parents didn’t name him “John”- a.k.a. Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy, in case you all don’t recognize the reference.

#: 196334. Roy S. Laufer msg. We did our best to keep our private life private. I think they were happy years, at least many of them--probably most.

When Robert wasn’t writing, and studying, we roamed the world. We went around it four times, and into over a hundred different countries. And we went to Antarctica and through the Northwest Passage. We met people from everywhere and enjoyed those meetings...what else can anyone ask?

#: 196516 Dan Corrigan msg. Robert had that paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm hung up in his study for years.

#: 196826. JD msg. Someone else said it a few years ago, but it’s worth saying again...you’re all Heinlein’s Children.

#: 197030. Dan Henderson msg. All that can be offered now is the signature editions which Ace is putting out. The second edition of *To Sail Beyond The Sunset* will be in the signature style, but the one currently on the stands is a normal first paperback edition.

Your Ruddy Abyssinian named Pixel is named for our Pixel--Robert liked the name and included it in *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls*. Pixel doesn’t walk through walls if he can get a human to hold a “people door” open for him--otherwise he has his Flexport, which he will use if necessary.

As I understand it, all copies of “Destination Moon” are worn out--but George Pal had a 16 mm copy of his own, and possibly more copies can be made from that...maybe. Who knows? (Later on. There will be two showings of DM at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, later this month--July--apparently someone found a print.)

And now back to answering all the letters once again.

I weep for all of us--

Sincerely,

(signed) Virginia Heinlein